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Seagull is a project for the Euroregion Baltic (ERB) with the main purpose of developing and anchoring a long-term strategy and a joint transnational development programme (JTDP) for the region. The programme will form the basis for future investments in the environment and infrastructure, etc. It will thereby contribute to social, economic and environmentally sustainable development throughout the region.

The East partners' co-financing situation:

- More active participation and deeper commitment in the project from the East partners are now secured for one year ahead through approvals of the following applications:
 1. To Tacis-CBC for the Kaliningrad Oblast (in all Seagull work packages).
 2. To PHARE-CBC for participation of the Kurzeme Planning Region in Latvia (in WP 2-4).
 3. To Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) for participation in WP1 activities for the Lithuanian and Latvian parties.
- Our Lithuanian partner has unfortunately got a rejection on its PHARE application, but is still prepared to do the best to fulfil its tasks in the project.
- Our Polish Partners are just now preparing a PHARE application – deadline in September.

Activities carried out since previous Seagull News:

- The Seagull Steering Committee (SC) met in Klaipeda, Lithuania on August 7, with a crammed agenda to go through. The main issue was to discuss seven draft reports about Regional strategies, Democracy, Gender Equality, Science Parks, and Rural Areas. The SC approved that the reports – after needed re-drafting – will form basic input to a series of seminars and workshops during the coming year. The draft reports will later be available on www.eurobalt.org.
Other important decisions were:
 - to recommend the ERB Board and Council to initiate more twinning between municipalities in the ERB regions (in order to make the ERB cooperation as concrete as possible),
 - to approve a draft of an Information and Communication Strategy for ERB to be put forward to the ERB Council for decision,
 - that it is a central task for all SC members to properly inform about and discuss Seagull issues in their respective home organisations.
- The project coordinators and some of the WP leaders of the Seagull, Baltic Gateway, SEBTrans Link and South Baltic Arc projects (all INTERREG III B projects) carried out an information exchange and coordination workshop on Bornholm, August 27-28. It was decided that the projects will cooperate much closer from now on. Representatives of the three transport corridor projects will be invited to participate in all Seagull WP1 workshops and thereby contribute with input to the planned Joint Transnational Development Programme that is planned to be the main output of the Seagull project. The projects will also cooperate about a common set of indicators for benchmarking as well as on investigations of financing sources for infrastructure investments, and will implement two common conferences about project results during mid 2004 and spring 2005.
- The Seagull project coordinator informed about the project status at the ERB Council meeting on Bornholm, August 29-30. The draft Information and Communication Strategy was approved by the Council. A very positive comment from the Polish delegation was that the Polish ERB secretariat in Elblag will be re-organised in a way that will respond to demands for an active implementation of the Seagull project.

Activities during the coming month:

- Several workshops and seminars in the ERB member regions about the Regional Strategies in the ERB regions, Water Management, Innovative Centres and SMEs, and Rural Development – see the website.
- Project information at conferences in Ronneby and to Swedish Municipal Boards.
- Conference in Elblag, Poland on September 30 about the Seagull project and a new Polish implementation organisation and project input.

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